

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 181 409

CS 005 184

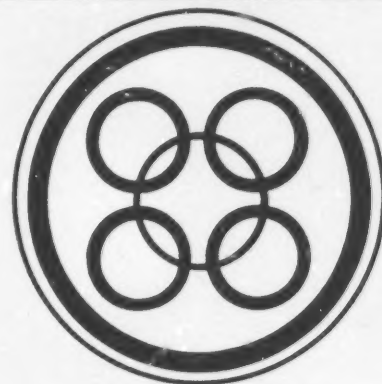
AUTHOR Winkeljohann, Rosemary
TITLE Reading is Thinking.
INSTITUTION North Dakota Univ., Grand Forks. Center for Teaching and Learning.
PUB DATE Nov 79
NOTE 10p.
JOURNAL CIT INSIGHTS into Open Education: v12 n3 Nov 1979
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Authors; Booklists; Child Language; Childrens Books; *Cognitive Processes; *Developmental Stages; Elementary Education; *Psycholinguistics; *Reading Comprehension; *Reading Processes
IDENTIFIERS *Kuskin (Karla); *Piaget (Jean)

ABSTRACT

The focus article in this newsletter contains a discussion of the theory of reading as a thinking process and offers practical suggestions for implementing instruction in teaching reading as a thinking process. The section on theory is based on observations of the reading process as perceived by psycholinguists such as Frank Smith and Kenneth Goodman and on the child development theories of Jean Piaget. The article's practical suggestions for teaching sequencing and logical thinking include retelling stories, following recipes, reordering comic frames, making up riddles for logical thinking, creating step-by-step stories, writing how-to books, and planning a trip. The newsletter also includes a list of books written and illustrated by Karla Kuskin, citing publishers and their addresses. (MHM)

* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *

ED181409



CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH DAKOTA
GRAND FORKS 58201

Volume 12, Number 3
November 1979

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Reading is Thinking

by Sister Rosemary Winkeljohann

Introducing the Author

Books by Karla Kuskin

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Center for Teaching
& Learning

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

INSIGHTS

into open education

CS0005184

Reading is Thinking

By Sister Rosemary Winkeljohann
University of North Dakota

Teachers enter classrooms everyday of the school year ready to teach reading; they only create an environment in which the *children teach themselves* to read. The following thoughts are directed to helping teachers become more sensitive to the "child's needs"; to help build an environment for the child; and to understand the reading processes and become catalytic agents to help children teach themselves.

It might help to think of days when we sat in our typing class and wanted to learn to type. The teacher only presented the students with hints and made suggestions of home keys, used charts, covered the keys with colored caps, played music and presented exercises so that the students would eventually develop touch typing. In the final analysis we must, however, conclude that the students taught themselves how to type using the suggestions of the teacher; the students had to teach themselves. So it is with children learning to read.

There are a few basic premises that need to be investigated because they are the basis for my own thoughts on reading.

1. Reading is an interaction between thought and language. The processes of mental development are the same as the development of the reading process. (Reading is referred to as comprehension in this article.)
2. Language is a developmental process. The child puts together her/his way of communicating not by way of imitation (Skinnarian

view) or just because it is an innate ability (N. Chomsky) but a combination of the two which Kenneth Goodman calls *cognativism*.

3. Reading involving word recognition skills (phonics, structural analysis, sight words, context clues and other skills) are only tools every child might need to read. Perceptual skills—auditory and visual discrimination—are tools to aid comprehension. Reading is a "guessing game" as Kenneth Goodman has called it.
4. Oral language is produced in a time sequence, but written language must be arranged in such a way that meaning is conveyed with less words and *without* the aid of pitch, stress and juncture.
5. Reading is a complex psycholinguistic behavior which consists of decoding thought, structural and semantic dimensions and interpreting the deep structure data relative to an individual's established objectives (Smith, 1978).
6. Human beings have behaviors that can be predicted to some degree and these behaviors are subject to analysis.
7. Meaning is not in the print but in the head of the reader.
8. According to the Goodman Reading Model the fluent reader has available to her/him three major cueing systems to use. When trying to reconstruct the meanings which an author originally encoded in print, the reader uses these cueing systems:
 - a. *The graphophonic system, i.e., the shapes of print and the relationships between these shapes and various sounds.*

- b. *The syntactic system--a reader's feel for the flow of language.*
- c. *The semantic system--a reader's knowledge of the story line or topic being read. Mature readers are able to cumulatively build up and monitor a meaningful and coherent representation of the story or topic as it unfolds.*

One should keep in mind Piaget's theory that by about seven years of age the child has reached a point where s/he has the ability to "reason," but reasons adequately only about direct experiences, not abstractions. This is the age when most children are learning to read. Remember reading can be very abstract! At this age or stage the child does have the ability to study various aspects of language, including reading, if and only if we are sensitive to certain considerations and keep the reading as concrete as possible.

1. When the child possesses the operations of *identity* and *reversibility*, the child can view a system and make transformations upon it; then, since s/he retains the original perception, return it to its previous conditions. The child can hold a basic idea in mind and manipulate and expand it in various ways. Specifically, rearrangement of language elements--words, phrases, sentences--becomes possible. The child can determine, through a comparison of the original with subsequent changes of word order or substitutions to enrich the meaning. It seems that before a child can understand the printed symbols s/he must possess this ability of reversibility. The more developed this process, the more intent the comprehension.
2. The child possesses the process of *seriation* and multiple hier-

archical classifications of objects and concepts close to her/his own life experiences. Semantic variations begin for the child. Vocabulary also can grow, if it is based on something the child knows. It is reasonable to infer from the findings of Piaget that reading activities during this period of a child's life, in terms of content, can vary widely, but it should not be expected that children will reason well about what they have read unless it relates rather closely to direct experiences. In any reading program organized along Piaget's theories, reading activities during the elementary grades would provide increased emphasis on developing logical operations by including opportunities to: combine sentence and word elements, associate elements in different ways, establish correspondence or identity among elements and would encourage students to transform the order of elements and observe the differences produced.

The implications of Piaget's theory, and those of other investigators who have been influenced by him, are stated by E. Burgess in Values in Early Childhood Education, a publication of the National Education Association. These are as follows:

1. The importance of sensory-motor experience is underlined.
2. Language, especially that which relates to labeling, categorizing and expressing, is intimately tied to developing greater facility in thinking.
3. New experiences are more readily assimilated when built on the familiar.
4. Repeated exposure to a thing or an idea in different contexts contributes to the clarity and flexibility of a growing concept

of thing or idea.

5. Accelerated learning of abstract concepts without being sufficiently related to direct experience, may result in symbols without meaning.

As we further investigate the close relationship between reading and thinking, we must keep in mind that there is another very important aspect to learning to read; namely, the affective. This article does not deal with the important influence of affective reading but we must remember that it also must be considered. However, since we are concerned about the close relationship between reading and thinking, the following chart may be helpful.

<u>READING</u>	<u>THINKING</u>
1. Sequence	1. Logic
2. Classification	2. Classification
3. Inter-connect	3. Inference
4. Paraphrasing	4. Assimilation

Very basic to all reading skills is sequence—the placing of elements in order. Without this ability, there can be no understanding of what is read. Sequence in reading is following directions, time order, ideas subordinate to the main idea, time/space relationship and cause and effect, to mention only a few. This process is the same as the process we refer to in thinking as logic. Can the child think logically in a verbal form? Before the child is exposed to printed form, we must know if the child possesses a logical order in her/his own thinking. The question is: Is the mind a file or a pile? Many times when a child is asked to retell a story, the statement, "No wait! . I forgot to tell you . . . , " might indicate a lack of sequence or logical thinking. The child who cannot retell a story in a visual/aural situation is not likely to be able to retell a story or event in a reading situation. Reading is a very abstract form of communication. Some simple verbal directions to help the child develop this sequence skill or process would be profitable. A few suggestions follow.

RETELLING A STORY

All children watch TV. Having children retell the TV series or story can become an excellent process for helping students put their mind into files rather than into piles of ideas. Have a small group of students (six or so) who have seen the same TV program the evening before, form a circle. One child begins to tell the story; then, at a certain time the leader or teacher says, "next," and another child continues the story. Each child must think of the sequence of events so the TV story can be told in order.

RECIPES

Cookbooks are a natural place to look when studying sequence because recipes follow a systematic progression. Many children enjoy sharing with others their favorite recipes of dishes that they can make. These can be compiled into a Child's Cookbook. Recipes even as simple as making a can of soup may be included in the collection.

No-cook recipes such as no-bake cookies may be made in the classroom as a means of helping the whole class become involved in a fun way to practice sequencing. The following are just a few of the cookbooks for children.

- Ault, Roz and Liz Urameck. Kids are Natural Cooks. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974.
- Borghese, Anita. The Down to Earth Cookbook. New York: Charles Schibner's Sons, 1973.
- Brown, Helen Evan and Philip S. Brown. The Boys' Cookbook. Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1959.
- Cook, Ann. What's Cooking? Glendale, California: Bowmar, 1976.
- Cooper, Terry T. and Marilyn Ratner. Many Hands Cooking. New York: Thomas J. Crowell, 1974.
- Croft, Karen B. The Good for Me Cookbook. San Francisco, California: R and E Research Associates, 1971.
- Ferreira, Nancy J. The Mother-Child Cook Book. Menlo Park, California: Pacific Coast Publishers, 1969.
- Goodwin, Mary T. and Gerry Pollen. Creative Food Experiences for Children. Washington, D.C.: Center for Science in the Public Interest, 1974.
- Johnson, Georgia and Gail Povey. Metric Milk Shakes and Witches' Cakes. Scholastic Book Services, 1976.
- Levine, Lois. The Kids in the Kitchen Cookbook. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1973.
- McAfee, Oralie, Evelyn W. Haines and Barbara B. Young. Cooking and Eating with Children—A Way to Learn. Washington, D.C.: Association for Childhood Education International, 1974.
- Milne, A. A. The Pooh Party Book. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1971.
- Moore, Eva. The Lucky Cookbook for Girls and Boys. Scholastic Book Services, 1974.
- Wilms, Barbara. Crunchy Bananas and Other Great Recipes Kids Can Cook. Salt Lake City and Santa Barbara: Sagamore Books, 1975.

COMIC STRIPS

Every week the Sunday section of the newspaper called the "funny paper" is read and enjoyed but then discarded to the newspaper recycling pile. Here is another suggestion for recycling some of the comic strips. You will need a comic that is not a part of a series but complete in itself. Paste the comic strip on a piece of paper; be sure it is well pasted because your next step is to cut out the individual frames of the comic strip. When you have a pile of individual frames, you are ready with an exercise for helping students to think sequentially. Have the student(s) put these comic picture frames in order.

It is important to remember that the comic frames need not be placed in the same order that the author did. The student may have created her/his own order. As long as the student justifies the placement of the frames, s/he is right. The end product is not important; it is the mental process that becomes the goal.

RIDDLES

Have children make up riddles such as:

*First you wash it,
Second you roll it,
Third you comb it.
What is it?*

*First you buy it,
Second you wrap it,
Third you give it away.
What is it?*

*First you turn it on,
Second you adjust it,
Third you watch it.
What is it?*

The steps can go to five or even six. The fact that children can guess the answer isn't important, but it is important that each child is thinking logically or in an orderly fashion.

STEP-BY-STEP

Tell the student that a little man from Mars will be visiting her/him. This Martian has never seen tennis shoes. Have the student describe to the Martian the step-by-step process of putting on a pair of tennis shoes. (This activity can be done with any other sequential process familiar to a young student.)

WHAT MAKES THIS HUMOROUS?

The teacher constructs, through pictures or words, a series of events which culminate in an illogical outcome. The students must identify what makes this funny and why. For example:

*Mother places a pot on the stove. In the pot she places cooking oil.
When the oil gets hot she adds popcorn and places a lid on the pot.
Pop, pop, pppity, pop, take off the lid and what's inside? VANILLA
ICE CREAM.*

At an older level, students can create their own comic strips with such unanticipated events as having a football player catch what should be the game-winning pass only to run the wrong way down the field, or the player may have caught a watermelon instead. Discussion needs to follow to explore what made this funny.

WRITING "HOW TO" BOOKS

By nature, most students have an imagination. This activity would not only give the students a chance to exercise their imagination but also would help them understand that the end product is the result of a series of sequential steps. Tell the students that they are to write or tell the steps for making a mud pie, a snowman, a boondoggle

or a watermelon pickle. By setting up a hypothetical or unknown situation, the students' mind is free to plan a variety of ways to do things without being inhibited by the correct or incorrectness of her/his process.

Encourage the students to include the steps in making these items, instead of allowing the students to just enumerate the materials that are needed.

PLANNING A TRIP

Children love to go on trips but very seldom do they have anything to do with the planning of a trip. This suggestion deals with the children planning a trip to ? for ? time and with ? . In this process small groups can form to plan different trips but each group would have to produce a step-by-step procedure to arrive at their destination. As one group reports back to another group, the second group should interact by asking questions like, "Didn't you forget the gas for the car?" and "Did you forget to make reservations at the motel?" This type of exercise can make all students aware of actions which are a part of our total life. Over and above this, students will be developing the cognitive process of logic.

REFERENCES

- Burgess, E. Values in Early Childhood Education. Washington: National Education Association, 1965.
- Carrol, J. "Developmental Parameters of Reading Comprehension" in John Guthrie's Cognition, Curriculum and Comprehension. Delaware: International Reading Association, 1977.
- Elkind, D. Children and Adolescents: Interpretive Essays on Jean Piaget. New York: Oxford University Press, 1970.
- Halliday, M. A. Learning How to Mean: Exploration in the Development of Language. England: Dover Publications, Inc., 1975.
- Piaget, J. The Language and Thought of the Child. Cleveland: Meridian Books, 1969.
- Piaget, J. Play, Dreams and Imitation in Children. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1962.
- Smith, F. Understanding Reading. New York: Holt, Reinhart, Winston, 1978.
- Stauffer, R. Teaching Reading as Thinking Process. New York: Harper and Row, 1969.

INSIGHTS is published eight times during the academic year by the Center for Teaching and Learning, University of North Dakota.

Subscriptions are \$3.50 per year payable by check or money order to INSIGHTS, Center for Teaching and Learning, Box 8158, University of North Dakota, Grand Forks, ND 58202.
Editor - Clara A. Pederson

Introducing the Author



Sister Rosemary Winkeljohann, an Ursuline Sister from Cincinnati, Ohio, is a faculty member at the Center for Teaching and Learning. Prior experiences include elementary and secondary teaching and administration, Director of Member Services for the National Council of Teachers of English and Associate Director of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills. She has edited a number of publications and has had articles published in professional journals.



Karla Kuskin listening to a child read her book
Washington Triad Follow Through Book Fair
May 1979

The National Council of Teachers of English Award for Excellence in Poetry for children will be presented to Karla Kuskin at the NCTE Convention in San Francisco this month.

Books by Karla Kuskin

Karla Kuskin has written and illustrated many beautiful books for children. A list of the books follow:

AVAILABLE FROM HARPER AND ROW

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNPOQRSTUVWXYZ

ALEXANDER SOAMES: HIS POEMS

ALL SIZES OF NOISES

THE ANIMALS AND THE ARK

ANY ME I WANT TO BE

THE BEAR WHO SAW THE SPRING

IN THE FLAKY FROSTY MORNING

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TREES

JAMES AND THE RAIN

JUST LIKE EVERYONE ELSE

NEAR THE WINDOW TREE

ROAR AND MORE

THE ROSE ON MY CAKE

SAND AND SNOW

SQUARE AS A HOUSE

THE WALK THE MOUSE GIRLS TOOK

WHAT DID YOU BRING ME?

WHICH HORSE IS WILLIAM?

WATSON, THE SMARTEST DOG IN THE U.S.A.

A SPACE STORY (*Illustrated by Marc Simont*)

AVAILABLE FROM OTHER COMPANIES

A BOY HAD A MOTHER WHO BOUGHT HIM A HAT

HERBERT HATED BEING SMALL

HOW DO YOU GET FROM HERE TO THERE?

By Nicholas Charles (Illustrated by Karla Kuskin)

JANE ANNE JUNE SPOON AND HER VERY ADVENTUROUS

SEARCH FOR THE MOON

By Nicholas Charles (Illustrated by Karla Kuskin)

Houghton Mifflin, Co.

Houghton Mifflin, Co.

The Macmillan Company

W. W. Norton & Company

Karla Kuskin is currently working on a new book of poems which will be a collection of poems from her former books.

ADDRESSES OF THE PUBLISHING COMPANIES

Harper and Row Publishers, Inc.
10 E. 53rd Street
New York, NY 10022

Houghton Mifflin, Company
1 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02107

The Macmillan Company
866 Third Avenue
New York, NY 10022

W. W. Norton and Company, Inc.
500 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10036